

BlackJack Provider

The Army's Only Contingency COSCOM

Winter 2004

Volume 4

AIRBORNE



Family Farwells
Transfer of Authority
Combat Logistic Patrols
Humanitarian Assistance

SAUDI ARABIA

Blackjack Provider

1st COSCOM: The Army's Only Contingency Support Command

ON THE COVER...



Soldiers committed to fighting the war on terrorism. Cover by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO. COSCOM graphics by Pfc. Joseph Gregory, 507th Corps Support Group.

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SHARP SHOOTER

Various photos taken by 1st COSCOM PAO staff to include some submissions from HHC, 1st COSCOM and the 623rd Quartermaster Company.

Blackjack Provider

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Letter from the command

As commander of the 1st Corps Support Command and Logistical Support Area Anaconda, I extend my best wishes that this new year and new mission will hold great challenges and accomplishments for us all. It is certainly difficult in these times to be far from home, but this absence gives us the opportunity to reflect on the blessings we have as Americans and to realize the importance of those things that we sometimes take for granted. Our country is truly the greatest the world has ever known, and we are fortunate to have the opportunity to help others

gain the freedoms we enjoy and the ability to celebrate in peace.

Some of you are near the end of your tour in Iraq and should use the recent holidays as a springboard for an emotional and well deserved reunion with your families. You have worked hard this past year with superb results. Take pride in your accomplishments and enjoy the time with your loved ones.

For those units that are preparing to join us, spend as much time as you can with your family. It will be some time before you are able to see them again. The mission here is a great

and important one that will be your utmost focus.

As for our units operating in the rear, you not only have a heavy mission to sustain in supporting the XVIII Airborne Corps, but you are also the key for us to reach back to the rear to our family members. We depend on you and know that this mission will remain at the forefront.

For the rest of us, let's use this time to begin creating relationships that will sustain us throughout the coming year. It is important for us to rely on each other to be able to count on each other when needed.

Take this time to reflect on your family and loved



Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine
Commanding General

ones that I am sure are thinking of you. Continue to Soldier with pride and aggressively perform your mission. Maintain focus on your warrior skills. You are the best in the world and should be proud of your service.

Remain vigilant, take care of yourself and take care of each other. God bless our great nation. FIRST TEAM, ATW



Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen
1st COSCOM

The 1st COSCOM is ready to ensure that the mission is completed on the front lines and back in garrison. We are highly trained as individuals and as a unit. Our missions both here and in the rear

are tough ones and with our current record of mission accomplishment, I know that we are up for the challenge.

During times like these, we must not lose focus of the little things, like proper military courtesies, taking care of Soldier issues, and paying attention to detail at all times. These are the things that, if we fail to monitor, will come back and bite us.

During holidays throughout the year, especially those that are normally spent with family, to include birthdays, times can be tough. There are many

assets within the 1st COSCOM to help you get through those difficult times. With today's technology, communication to family back at home can be more frequent and is readily available. You also have the chaplains, and more important, your battle buddy to get you through those difficult times. Remember that the 1st COSCOM is your extended family. Take this time to build your relationships while conducting the mission. These are the Soldiers that will cover your six if and when the time calls for it.

The 1st COSCOM has grown with the addition of our Reserve and National Guard units. Welcome to the family. You have already so far demonstrated your enthusiasm to be a member of the First Team. We are glad to have you on board and look forward to creating a cohesive relationship.

Every member of the 1st COSCOM is at war. And we must recognize this each day. This is serious business and we want to ensure that each member makes it back home to his or her loved ones safely. FIRST TEAM!

COSCOM deploys in support of OIF

Story and photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO

FORT BRAGG, N.C.— Approximately 300 Soldiers from the 1st Corps Support Command left Fort Bragg Nov. 16 to deploy to Iraq

their headquarters,” said Col. James Currie, G3 operations officer.

There are currently about 1,500 Fort Bragg logistical Soldiers that are in Iraq, and these numbers will

rise to between 2,000 and 2,500 through March, Fontaine said in an interview prior to boarding for OIF.

“The COSCOM deployment started about a month ago with the advance party going to

behind. Sadness was in the air as Soldiers hugged their family members with tears streaming down their faces while saying farewell.

“It is tough to leave the ones you love behind for such a long period of time, at the same time, they know that I have a mission to do,” said Capt. Justin Perusek, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st COSCOM commander.

Families will be able to keep in touch with e-mail, phone calls and mail, Perusek said.

The 1st COSCOM will have approximately 18,000 Soldiers, which consists of a combination of active duty, Reserves and National Guard Soldiers. The numbers will dwindle in the spring and summer time frame when many Soldiers are scheduled to redeploy, Fontaine said.

“We are in the saddle now,” Fontaine said. “We are engaged with providing logistical support to all our multinational components in Iraq.”



Teary eyed family members place their hands over their hearts during the National Anthem which was played prior to Soldiers boarding the aircraft for OIF Nov. 16.

in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Among them was Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine, 1st COSCOM commander and Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, 1st COSCOM command sergeant major.

The Soldiers joined thousands of their comrades already deployed to Iraq, while others from the command were scheduled to deploy in late December.

The deployment will be the first time that the 1st COSCOM has deployed multiple headquarters simultaneously to OIF.

“In the past we have deployed smaller elements to support various commands in theater such as a transportation company or a maintenance company. For this deployment we will have about half of the COSCOM deployed with

Kuwait,” Fontaine said.

The advance party was sent ahead to conduct preparation for the main body of Soldiers coming in. While in Kuwait, Soldiers will conduct additional combat training and logistical operations until it is time for their departure to Iraq.

The COSCOM will support the entire multinational force in Iraq as far as providing logistics, Fontaine said.

“The biggest thing - and we saw it coming - was distribution of supplies and logistics in a very large theater,” he said. The challenge is to distribute the enormous amount of logistics for the force at the right time and the right place, he said.

Although the Soldiers were ready to deploy with weapons and equipment in hand, many of them did not want to leave their families



Capt. Jason MacDonald, chemical officer, HHC, 1st COSCOM, spends a little quality time with his daughter prior to boarding an aircraft headed to OIF Nov. 16.

Transfer of Authority

1st Corps Support Command takes the reigns of LSA Anaconda

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, Iraq—The 1st Corps Support Command accepted authority of LSA Anaconda, and other locations in Iraq, from the 13th Corps Support Command in a transfer of authority ceremony at the Morale Welfare and Recreation Complex here Dec. 12.

Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine, 1st COSCOM commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen performed the unveiling of the colors to signify the transfer of authority.

“I hope that each of you take great pride in what you have accomplished this year. Your service has been outstanding,” said Lt. Gen. Thomas F. Metz, Multi-National Corps-Iraq commander.

Metz was the guest speaker and the reviewing officer for the ceremony, which was moved indoors because of inclement weather.

“Our success is your success,” Metz said.

The 13th COSCOM arrived in Iraq in January 2004 and has since successfully conducted an array of operations that includes the delivery of meals ready to eat, fuel, ammunition, and bottled water. Other operations include the processing of approximately 2,000 tons of mail, and conducting an average of 200 convoys a day.

“We are being replaced by the 1st COSCOM, who have known for over a year that 2005 would



Photo by Pfc. Jerome Bishop

The 1st Corps Support Command commander and the command sergeant major, after unveiling the command's colors, unfurl their unit's streamers at LSA Anaconda Dec. 12 in a transfer of authority ceremony.

be their year,” said Brig. Gen. James E. Chambers, 13th COSCOM commander. “They are more than ready and trained to take the mission and will improve on the systems currently in place,” said Chambers.

Some of the installation improvements made by the 13th COSCOM focused on quality of life. The installation now has a movie theater, an MWR facility and two swimming pools.

Chambers thanked the members of his command for completing their mission successfully.

“We can go home with our heads high and our backs straight,” said Chambers.

Fontaine, born in La Louvière, Belgium, thanked the 13th COSCOM for their hospitality and professionalism and said he is confident in his staff and that his Soldiers are up to the task.

“We will maintain the high standards,” Fontaine said.

Under the command of the 1st COSCOM at LSA Anaconda will be approximately 15,000 troops, including Soldiers, Marines, sailors and airman from the active component, Reserves and National Guard.

507th Corps Support Group assumes humanitarian assistance mission

Story and photos by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

L S A
A N A C O N D A ,
Iraq—Members of the 507th Corps Support Group, 1st Corps Support Command and the 172nd CSG, 13th COSCOM traveled to the Door Alsina village Dec. 7 in order to not only transfer to the 1st COSCOM ongoing projects, but to also meet with the village leader and distribute Beanie Babies to the local school children.

These ongoing projects and the relationship established with the village is an endeavor called Operation Anaconda Neighborhood (OAN), an extension of Operation Iraqi Children (OIC). Operation Iraqi Children is a program that enables Americans to send school supply kits to Iraqi children.

“In the past, \$10,000 worth of supplies was donated by American citizens. Today is Beanie Baby day and introduction of the new command coming in,” said Lt. Col. R.J. Gore, 172nd CSG chaplain.

Operation Anaconda Neighborhood takes the OIC program a step further. It establishes governate support teams that are responsible for conducting minor infrastructure recovery operations and reconstruction assistance of small villages.

Door Alsina is one of those villages and has approximately 700 villagers. Within these numbers, there are approximately 110 grade school students who attend Manathera, a school built with the aid of the 172nd CSG.

“The 507th (CSG) is taking over the monitoring of three OAN projects handed over to us from the 172nd



Maj. John H.G. Rasmussen, Chaplain, 507th Corps Support Group, 1st Corps Support Command, gives an Iraqi child a Beanie Baby during a visit to Door Alsina village, Iraq Dec. 7. Members of the 507th CSG traveled to the village to give students who attend the Manathera School and neighborhood children the toys as a part of the project Operation Anaconda Neighborhood.

CSG,” said Maj. Charles Newbegin, operations officer, 507th CSG.

“The first was the building of the school which was completed in October 2004. The second project is the water filtration system project and the third is a sewer system project,” said Newbegin.

Reconstruction assistance for the Iraqi people involves building, repair, reconstitution, and reestablishment of the social and material infrastructure of Iraq. This can include, but is not limited to water and sanitation infrastructure, food



Iraqi children form a line to receive Beanie Babies from members of the 507th CSG, 1st CSCOM during a visit to Door Alsina village, Iraq Dec. 7.



Maj. John H.G. Rasmussen (right), Chaplain, 507th CSG, 1st COSCOM is introduced by an interpreter to a village leader at the Door Alsina village, Iraq Dec. 7. The village leader monitors ongoing projects and establishes lines of communication between the villagers and units.

production and distribution, agriculture, electronic power generation and distribution, telecommunications, education, transportation, and initiatives that further restores the rule of law and effective governance.

Civil Affairs detachments are vital components and heavily involved with this process.

Traveling to the village wasn't all business. After introduction of the incoming command to villagers, the

"It is wonderful seeing the smiles on their little faces."

-Maj. John H.G. Rasmussen, 507th CSG

chaplains and members of their unit ministry teams delivered small surprises to the younger members of the village. Approximately 110 Beanie Babies were passed out to the students of the Manathera School and the smaller children living in the village.

"We are piggy backing on this trip to use the opportunity to provide humanitarian aid to win the hearts and minds of the villagers. We also want to show a friendly face," said Maj. John H.G. Rasmussen, 507th CSG Chaplain.

At first the children appeared to be withdrawn at first sight of the Soldiers and their vehicles. However, once they saw the colorful small stuffed animals, they appeared excited and formed a line behind the vehicles to receive their gifts.

"Sometimes the crowd of children can get out of control because the children are excited about what we have to give them. Sometimes we have to take a break and let them calm down, and then proceed with handing things out. But the bottom line is that we try to ensure that each

child gets whatever it is we have to give them," said Gore.

"It is wonderful seeing the smiles on their little faces," said Rasmussen.

The 507th Unit Ministry Team, with the assistance of the 1st COSCOM Civil Affairs detachment intends to continue providing this type of outreach and reconstruction program for the next year or so.

"The Iraqi people have many projects they are focused on and we want to help and see them succeed," said Newbegin.



A 1st COSCOM Soldiers poses with members of the Door Alsina village, Iraq Dec. 7

Army's Equal Opportunity program aids commanders in diversity training

By Pfc. Jerome Bishop, 1st COSCOM Public Affairs

The U.S. military, like America itself, is a melting pot of religious and cultural diversity. Living with people with origins and traditions from throughout the world isn't easy at times, but assistance is just around the corner.

The Army's Equal Opportunity (EO) program aids Soldiers and civilians in the education and acceptance of the various people that make up today's Army. LSA Anaconda is no exception. With the arrival of the 1st Corps Support Command, a new EO advisor is available to help commanders tackle the issues that sometimes arise from living in a diverse community.

Sgt. 1st Class Richard Weldon, the 1st COSOM EO advisor, is the man who ensures that commanders receive EO information, so that they can be a better asset to their Soldiers living and working environment.

"The EO program is the prevention of discrimination against Soldiers and civilians based on gender, race, color, national origin and religion," Weldon said.

As defined in Army Regulation 600-20, the equal opportunity regulation, "the Equal Opportunity program formulates, directs, and sustains a comprehensive effort to maximize human potential and to ensure fair treatment for all persons based solely on merit, fitness and capability in support or readiness. EO philosophy is based on fairness, justice, and equity."

The goals of the program outlined in AR 600-20 are to provide EO for all Soldiers and family members within legal limits, to make and sustain effective units by eliminating discrimination, and to provide the same support to department of the Army employed civilians.

"[The EO programs] gives better understanding about the differences of others," Weldon said.

Positive reinforcement of EO gives units the ability to perform in any circumstances without the threat of internal or external discrimination, he said.

The EO program is the commander's program. It's available to help commanders ranging from company to brigade level to provide preventative training and to resolve an issue should one arise, Weldon said.

The Soldiers of the EO program have one of two duties, to serve as an EO representative to company and battalion sized units or to function as an EO advisor to brigade level units or higher, he said.

Advisors are responsible for getting training to commanders to supplement their EO training that must be conducted quarterly. Representatives are the Soldiers who actually conduct the training and act as intermediaries in the event of a violation of AR 600-20 and aid the Soldier affected in receiving proper assistance in resolving the issue, Weldon said.

Complaints are unfortunately an example that a Soldier or a group of Soldiers chose not to abide by EO regulations. However, complaints are rarely disregarded when presented for resolution.

There are two types of complaints a Soldier can file, informal and formal. Informal complaints get the issue resolved at the lowest level in the chain of command. These are the most common kinds of complaints, Weldon said.

The formal complaint is a lot more serious because it requires a serious violation to occur before it can be filed, he said. Formal complaints are taken directly to the unit commander, who has 14 days to have the issue initiated in an investigation.

Given the serious nature of these types of complaints, other agencies may take over the investigation by request of the commander or initiate their own if they deem necessary. Agencies able to investigate such violations are the chain of command, the EO advisor, the housing referral office, the Judge Advocate General, Military Police or Criminal Investigator, chaplains, medical agencies and the Inspector General, Weldon said.

Upon completion of the investigation, the individual responsible for the EO violation can be subject to punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

"The bottom line is the EO program is the commander's program," Weldon said. "My job as EO advisor is to advise commanders on policies and procedures."

The EO program and the advisors and representatives it hosts are a necessary asset to the function of the Army. Without it, the various genders, races, and religions of the Army wouldn't have been able to meld together to make the strong, effective, and battle-proven units serving today, Weldon said.

Schoomaker visits LSA Anaconda

By Pfc. Jerome Bishop, 1st COSCOM Public Affairs

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—LSA Anaconda was host to a brief but worthwhile visit from the highest-ranking Army official Dec. 27.

Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, paid Soldiers and airmen alike a visit during a tour of the middle eastern theater.

Schoomaker's tour began with a visit to the 507th Corps Support Group's, 457th Transportation Battalion. The 457th Transportation Battalion is a Reserve unit from Missouri, who is responsible for up-armorizing vehicles and conducting combat logistic patrols.

During his tour of the main workshop, Schoomaker took time to meet and greet troops working hard to provide armor to as many vehicles as they can.

While there, Schoomaker was shown several vehicles hit by both Improvised Explosive Devices and Vehicle-Borne IED's, and enemy small-arms fire. He was impressed at the level of progress these troops have made in providing sufficient protection with limited materials, said Schoomaker. Many of these Soldiers were presented the Army Chief of Staff



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Gen. Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff, sits down to lunch and socializes with Soldiers from various units stationed at LSA Anaconda Dec. 27 during a middle east tour.

coin for demonstrating their commitment to duty.

Following the visit with the troops from the 507th CSG, Schoomaker took the opportunity to socialize with Soldiers from various commands during lunch at Dining Facility One.

Many of the Soldiers took the opportunity to ask Schoomaker questions regarding issues about switching from Army Reserve to active status, and re-enlistment.

Before Schoomaker's departure of the DFAC, he gave Soldiers the opportunity for a series of photographs.

"It's good to see how the troops are doing," Schoomaker said.

It's a very important thing to keep the morale of the troops up, especially during deployment, he said.

After lunch, Schoomaker made his way to Big Bob's Truck Stop to take a tour of the facility and crew providing most of the armor protection to military vehicles.

"That was the first time I saw [the up-armor facility]. They've just started that since I've been here last," Schoomaker said.

From the things Schoomaker saw in the facility in the brief time he was able to visit, he was impressed and expressed his opinion in its necessity to the war effort, he said.

Upon leaving Big Bob's, the entourage made its way to the Joint Defense Operation Center to visit with the troops of the 81st Brigade Combat Team.

Here, he learned more and in depth about operations being conducted out of LSA Anaconda and how they are conducted.

After the tour of the JDOC, Schoomaker's visit was at an end. Although his visit seemed to be over as soon as it began, Schoomaker's visit left an important mark on the troops he visited, that senior leaders care.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Gen. Schoomaker meets with members of Big Bob's Truck Stop to get an overview of up-armorizing progress at LSA Anaconda Dec. 27.

COSCOM conducts advance live-fire training

By Pfc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM Public Affairs

Three days and two nights of training in the Kuwaiti desert can give a Soldier a lot more than numb feet and cold hands.

Soldiers of the 1st Corps Support Command participated in three day Convoy Live-Fire Exercise (CLFX) spanning Nov. 22 to Nov. 30.

Although the weather was a little less desirable for the Soldiers who attended, the training they received might mean the difference between life and death one day.

“This training is an excellent tool that will not only teach our Soldiers more efficient ways to conduct convoy operations, but also reinforce the confidence that they already have,” said Lt. Col. Gordon R. Roberts, Troop Support Battalion commander, 1st COSCOM.

Soldiers arrived at the CLFX range in the early evening of the first day, where they were given a safety briefing and an overview briefing on the events of the exercise.

The CLFX range is maintained and operated by Military Professional Resources Incorporated, a



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Duane Copowycz, Observer Controller for MPRI, conducts an after action review with Soldiers from the 1st COSCOM after completing a scenario during live-fire training November 2004.

company composed of former military, law enforcement and private sector leaders who provide training for the militaries and law enforcement agencies of the U.S. and other selected nations, according to the MPRI website.

“MPRI provides comprehensive and integrated programs that address training, education, leader development, organizational design and implementation, democracy transition, and emergency management across a broad spectrum of functional areas,” according to the website.

The first event of the second day was reinforcing Close Quarters Marksmanship (CQM) skills that Soldier learned the week before. Targets are engaged at various meters away from the firers. Simulated scenarios allowed Soldiers to engage threats left, right and behind their position, as well as engaging threats while walking and running.

“This method of firing is different from what we are used to at our home station. This training definitely opens your eyes and allows you to think outside the box,” said Sgt. Franchasca Deboe, administrative clerk, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st COSCOM.

After completion of CQM, Soldiers who would be drivers and truck commanders learned how to properly fire out of the driver’s window while driving in the event that additional suppressive fire is required.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

1st COSCOM Soldiers engage target on the move while conducting close quarters marksmanship training under the supervision of MPRI observer controllers November 2004.

Once Soldiers completed CQM training, a brief on the convoy operations began to give them detailed information on how to plan and what to expect while participating in convoys throughout the deployment.

“What they learn here at this training may one day save their lives and members of their crew,” said Roberts.

Additional training consisted of Soldiers learning how to keep a convoy together in traffic and in urban areas, how to react to Improvised Explosive Devices, and how to react to contact/fire from the driver and passenger sides of the vehicle.

The second day ended with pre-convoy operations and checks, vehicle inspections and final mission review before the next day.

Soldiers anticipated the third day of training, the live-fire exercise, where they would have the opportunity to put their training to the test.

“We learned the different stages and methods in conducting a successful convoy, now we will be

“This training definitely opens your eyes and allows you to think outside the box.”

**-Sgt. Franchasca Deboe
HHC, 1st COSCOM**



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

A litter team comprised of 1st COSCOM Soldiers move out to a medical evacuation landing zone during a scenario at convoy live-fire training held November 2004.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Three 1st COSCOM Soldiers pull security at a security halt during convoy live-fire training in Kuwait November 2004. The Soldier had previously conducted similar training at Fort Bragg prior to deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

given the opportunity to put it to the test,” said Capt. Justin Perusek, HHC, 1st COSCOM commander.

Vehicles were assigned particular responsibilities in order to help with command and control efforts during convoy operations. The crew of each vehicle practiced exiting and entering their vehicle in the event of a dismount.

Once the crews were ready, each convoy departed for the live-fire range.

Simulated events during the convoy gave Soldiers a chance to see how they would react in the event of an IED or rocket propelled grenade attack. Combat life savers treated Soldiers with simulated wounds while recovery teams towed hit vehicles.

“The enemy isn’t going to give you a ‘time out’. You have to be quick when it comes to hooking up a downed vehicle that requires towing,” said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin R. Ryan, deputy comptroller, HHC, 1st COSCOM.

A mock village provided drivers and TCs a chance to practice how to keep local traffic from mixing with the convoy vehicles.

The completion of the CLF range gave Soldiers more than just the training on how to make it out of a bad situation on any convoy as safely as possible, it gave them a brief idea on what their fellow Soldiers had to endure since the beginning of operations Iraqi and Enduring freedom.

“This training was excellent. The instructor s took their time with us to make sure we understood everything,” Deboe said.

SHARP SHOOTER



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Clockwise: (Left) Pfc. Gregory Dows, 264th Corps Support Battalion welds a piece of metal together for a vehicle he is up-armor in Baghdad. (Above-l) Capt. Kelly Hughes gives a Soldier intravenous fluids during a combat life saver class in Kuwait. (Above-right) 1st Corps Support Command Soldiers wait to "hot-load" a CH-47 Chinook at Fort Bragg. (Below-r) Members of the 623rd Quartermaster Company zero their weapons at a range in Kuwait. (Below-l) An aircraft with members of the 1st COSCOM advance party take flight to Kuwait.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca



Photo by Capt. Kelly Cole, 623 QM Co.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

(Above) Master Sgt. Larry Wise, HHC, 1st COSCOM gets into the Christmas spirit while deployed to Iraq. (Right) Soldiers listen to an observer controller during an after action review in Kuwait. (Below) Iraqi children pose for the camera after receiving meals ready to eat during a humanitarian mission in Iraq.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca



Photo by Capt. Kelly Cole, 623 QM Co.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

(Above) A 1st COSCOM soldier rides a camel at a bizarre in Kuwait. (Right) A sad little girl at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp holds up a sign to say farewell to a deploying Soldier. (Below) HHC, 1st COSCOM Soldiers on a C-130 Hercules in flight to Balad, Iraq.



Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca



Photo by 1st. Sgt. Donna King, HHC, 1st COSCOM

Sergeant Major of the Army visits troops

Story and photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM Public Affairs



Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston gets a picture taken with a wounded Soldier after a comforting conversation. Preston visited wounded troops Dec. 21 during a tour of LSA Anaconda.

Several members of the Army senior leadership, including the Sergeant Major of the Army, Kenneth O. Preston, visited the military and civilian residents of LSA Anaconda at various locations within the installation.

Following the USO show the night prior, Preston was joined by Command Sgt. Maj. of the Army Reserve, Michelle S. Jones and their staffs to tour the post. They visited key locations such as the Air Force hospital, several Air Force hangars, dining facilities, and Big Bob's Truck Shop. This is the up-armoring facility on post.

The first stop of the day, made at the hospital, gave the sergeants major an opportunity to visit and talk to service members wounded during on going operations from LSA Anaconda.

"I wanted to see the progress made at the hospital," said Preston. "It's good to see the improvements they've made. It's good to visit the troops to see how they're doing."

Watching the crew of doctors, nurses and health-care specialists from all over

the military at work was a positive experience, said Preston.

While visiting the hospital, Jones offered wounded Soldiers, Airmen and Marines an opportunity to have their families updated on how they're doing by means of a personal phone call from Jones.

The goal during this visit was to give service members an opportunity to ask questions, boost their morale and to make life better in the theatre, said Jones.

The tour's next stop took the entourage to two of the many aircraft hangars on the Air Force side of post. During their visit there, they were allowed a glimpse of equipment that most service members on post wouldn't have the opportunity to view.

Airmen gave the sergeants major a close look at equipment used to conduct missions using the Predator unmanned aerial vehicle for intelligence purposes, as well as F-16 fighter jets used in operations for close air support.

Upon completion of the airfield tour, the sergeants major sat down and dined

with several Soldiers during lunch at one of four dining facilities. Following lunch, the group set off to visit a location on post, which has been the subject of news for weeks.

Big Bob's Truck Stop is the facility on post that produces most of the armor for vehicles used by units stationed here. Since the up-armoring of various vehicles used in theatre has been a hot topic in recent news, the sergeants major wanted to see the process and progress first hand.

Seeing the process of up-armoring the vehicles and meeting the crews who did it left an outstanding impression on Jones, who was excited to see the safety concerns of the troops being addressed in such a professional manner, she said.

"It made me feel fantastic," said Jones. "[The contractors who work on the vehicles are] just a phenomenal group of individuals; they really care to keep the Soldiers safe."

"It was really beneficial to see a truck completely taken apart and put back together," said Preston. "I wanted to one: to see the facility and see the capability of the contractor, and two: to see if there were challenges and issues I could take back to improve the capability and progress they've made."

The sergeants major both agreed that seeing the up-armor facility ranked very high in their expectations and gave them a better insight to the level of protection U.S. troops are receiving.

After the tour of the facility and taking photos, the sergeants major linked up with the other celebrities on tour with the Hope and Freedom 2004 Tour to rest before traveling to visit troops in Afghanistan and South Korea.

Although only staying for a brief time, the efforts and accomplishments left lasting impressions on Preston and Jones.

"I watched this theatre mature from nothing, to what it is today," said Preston.

Building a legacy: The military Family

Story and photos by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO

Traditions are what remind us of the great things that those before us have accomplished and have since passed down from generation to generation. For many Soldiers serving in the military, past and present day, their traditions are deep rooted within serving their country. Some have become the fourth generation of their family to wear the Army uniform, while others have become the first, with a goal to become a part of generations with prestige.

Take the Akin family. In 1956, a newly commissioned officer fresh out of Texas A&M unknowingly began his family's legacy. 2nd Lt. George Akin was that commissioned officer and he would go on to hold almost every logistical position the Army had to offer; eventually becoming the commander of the Army's Test and Evaluation Command with the rank of major general he was indoctrinated into the Ordnance Corps Hall of Fame.

Maj. Gen. George Akin would eventually retire in 1991, but not before establishing a family dedication of serving their country.

Akin has two sons presently serving. Both have followed in their father's footsteps and joined the Army Ordnance Corps.

They are assigned to the 1st Corps Support Command, stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C. Col. Mark Akin is commander of the Corps Distribution Command (CDC) and is currently deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Lt. Col. George Akin Jr. is currently attending the U.S.

Army War College after serving a 12-month tour in Iraq himself. The Akin family's military service dates back to the Spanish-American War, Mark said.

The Akins as a family have demonstrated their commitment to serving their country, and while they are one example of the military family tradition, there are

many others within the 1st COSCOM that have begun or also desires to create a similar legacy.

Sgt. 1st Class Rosetta C. Owens, senior personnel service non-commissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st COSCOM is married to Sgt. 1st



Photo by unknown

Col. Mark Akin (left), CDC commander, with brother Lt. Col. George Akin, 7th Transportation commander at the change of command ceremony in Iraq.

Class Andre A. Owen, logistics non-commissioned officer, CDC, 1st COSCOM. The Owens met five years ago in South Hill, Va. while serving as Army recruiters.

They are both deployed jointly to the same location in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I wanted to serve my country," Rosetta said. "It was something I had always wanted to do."

Rosetta was the first in her family to start the tradition, however, Andre wasn't. His father had served in the Air Force for 30 years in Personnel Services. Andre also has a cousin currently serving in Iraq.

"My father served and I chose to do the same. He started the tradition for the family," Andre said.

FAMILY, Continued next page



Sgt. 1st Class Andre A. Owens with wife Sgt. 1st Class Rosetta C. Owens. Both Owens are currently deployed together in support of OIF.

FAMILY previous page

The Owens would like the family tradition to continue with their children, however, they want to leave this option open for their children to decide, Rosetta said.

“Our oldest daughter wants to be a nurse, so she is looking into the Army Nursing Program. We explained the pros and cons to her, however we don’t push her or any of our other children either way. In

the end we will support their decision,” Rosetta said.

When discussing about being deployed jointly to a combat zone both Owens were realistic, however, optimistic about the circumstance.

“This is an all volunteer army. We have to take the good with the bad. If you do deploy together, it makes the long deployment better because your spouse is there for you to vent if you have to or when you need someone to talk to,” Rosetta said.

Staff Sgt. Nathan McKeldin and Pfc. Jerome Bishop are brothers both currently deployed in support of OIF. Although not stationed in the same location, they manage to keep in touch.

McKeldin is a platoon sergeant and common ground station operator for the 319th Military Intelligence Battalion, 525th Military Intelligence Brigade and Bishop is a photojournalist for HHC, 1st COSCOM.

Bishop’s father served for a short period in the Army during the 1970s. However, although his father’s career was short-lived, he began a tradition that would eventually be passed onto his children.

“My dad heavily encouraged me to join the military,” Bishop said.

Bishop and McKeldin joined the Army after graduating from high school.

Based on the benefits that are offered and the independence the Army gives you, his father was an advocate for the Army, Bishop said.

“We got a jump start on life,” he added.

This is the second deployment for McKeldin, who previously deployed to Afghanistan; this is Bishop’s first.

They were both able to see each other during this current

FAMILY, Continued page 22

1st COSCOM CSM addresses future officers at Valley Forge

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO

WAYNE, Pa.—Reserve officer training component cadets in the Early Commissioning Program at Valley Forge Military Academy and College were paid a visit by a senior seasoned non-commissioned officer Nov. 3.

Command Sgt. Major Joseph R. Allen, command sergeant major of the 1st Corps Support Command, is the first COSCOM Sergeant Major to ever visit Valley Forge, a spokesperson said.

Valley Forge is one of only five colleges in the nation that offers an accelerated commissioning program and college degree for young Soldiers. It is an all male preparatory boarding school and two-year junior college. The accelerated ROTC commissioning program currently has seventeen prior enlisted Soldiers in its officer training ranks.

“Soldiers bring maturity, leadership experience, values and excellent military training to our program,” said Lt. Col. Christopher St. Jean, professor of military science.

During his visit to Valley Forge, Allen’s was able to meet with more than 200 college cadets, non-commissioned officer faculty and a group of former enlisted Soldiers.

Allen reviewed training and talked to the cadets about a career in the military.

He also offered advice and wisdom to over sixty future Army officers and he spoke about the importance of adhering to standards.

Leaders must always maintain personal standards and training related standards while ensuring that their Soldiers do the same, Allen said.

“Real leadership means demonstrating personal courage, mentoring others and caring for soldiers and their families,” Allen said.

On several occasions he reminded the audience about the importance of fitness. Your soldiers will know if you are conducting physical training or not, so stay in shape and lead by example, he said.

Allen concluded his remarks by warning the cadets about complacency and how complacency kills Soldiers.

“Never be complacent. The day you become complacent is the day you will die, said Allen.

Allen then, left the future officers with a final piece of advice. “Don’t worry about having all the answers, trust and rely on your NCOs,” he said.

After talking to the cadets, touring the facility and eating lunch with the cadets, Allen left Valley Forge leaving a lasting impression on the future leaders of tomorrow’s Army.

‘All day, everyday’

659th Maintenance Company maintains Forward Distribution Point

**Story and photos by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO**

BAGHDAD, Iraq—A small element of the 659th Maintenance Company, 264th Corps Support Battalion has a heavy task. The heavy task is running a Forward Distribution Point.

The FDP is a multi-class warehouse that supports over 180 Army, Marine and Air Force units. These units consist of engineers, signal, military intelligence, and civil affairs, to name a few. The FDP ensures that these units have what they need so that they can operate on the battlefield.

Approximately 30 Soldiers run this operation. Within the operations, each has a specific task to ensure quality assurance.

“FDP has one of the biggest missions and it is quite demanding,” said Warrant Officer Antoinette Tucker, supply systems technician and accountable officer.

“We try to process everything within a 24 to 48 hour window to ensure customers get their products on time,” Tucker said.

“Our biggest challenge is that right now we are doing twice the workload with less people than we would normally have at Fort Bragg,” said Sgt. 1st Class Dwayne Nesbitt, platoon sergeant.

“At Bragg, we don’t have to worry about additional duties such as force protection. We have to factor this into our operations,” Nesbitt said.

The FDP supplies four classes of provisions. These provisions range from office supplies and hydraulic fluid to plywood and equipment replacement parts.

On a monthly basis, the FDP processes 6,000 to 1,200 material release orders. MROs are customer receipts that identify who a particular ordered part belongs to.

The FDP is comprised of five divisions; stock control, issuing, receiving, turn in and storage.

“I take requisitions in from the customers, and we are able to track this by using MROs,” said Sgt. Theresa Jenkins, stock control and customer service non-commissioned officer.

Jenkins’ responsibilities don’t end there. She has the tasks of tracking requisitions, submitting follow ups, resolving any issues that customers may have with a part they received or haven’t received, and submitting requisitions to their higher source of suppliers.

“The job is difficult and demanding but I enjoy troubleshooting and helping customers when they have a

problem,” Jenkins said. “The Best part about this job is that I like to help [the customers].”

Once the customers have gone through Jenkins and their supplies come in, the next stop is Receiving.

Receiving is the location where parts are stored while they are processed for release to the customer. Receiving also provides Material Handling Equipment support.

Once processed, the parts are placed in Issuing, where the customer signs for their parts. Sgt. Williams McNeil, automated logistics sergeant, runs Issuing where parts are placed into storage.

Each supported command has their own storage bin identified solely for them to pick up items that they have requested, McNeil said. “There is also a pick up and storage location for bulk items,” he said.

“If a unit orders a bulk item and they do not have the means to pick up the item we dispatch a transportation unit to travel to their location with the bulk item in the form of a Transportation Movement Request. We have traveled as far as Forward Operating Base Duke,” Nesbitt said.

Along with these other component of the FDP is the Turn In section.

The Turn In section is an extremely important section, Nesbitt said. If a customer neglects to see this section, they will be prohibited to redeploy, he said.

Upon completion of this cycle, the process starts all over again.

“The soldiers are motivated and as long as they stay informed, they are willing to do anything,” Nesbitt said.

“All day, everyday” is the platoon’s motto because they are there for the customers all day, everyday, he said.



(Left) Spc. John Mawer, automated logistics specialist, 659th Maint. Co., inventories and signs out parts to Spc. Robert McMillan, prescribed load list clerk, 327th Signal Battalion, 35th Signal Brigade Dec. 31.

COSCOM Soldiers give thanks away from home

LIFESTYLES

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait—"Happy Thanksgiving," said Col. Mark Akin, commander of the Corps Distribution Command, 1st Corps Support Command, as he served food to service members in the camp's dinning facility.

Approximately 5,500 U.S. service members and coalition forces in transition and stationed here celebrated Thanksgiving dinner at a lunchtime feast held November 25.

Among the units present were the XVIII Airborne Corps' 1st COSCOM and various other Fort Bragg units.

The 1st COSCOM's main body arrived in Kuwait November 17 to begin its initial steps in the transition to be based in Iraq. While there, time was set aside to help Soldiers feel at home while away during the holidays.

"This is the first time and largest holiday meal we have ever had," said Maj. Jim Blair, Logistic Operations Officer for Camp Virginia command cell, 687th Quartermaster Battalion out of Dayton, Ohio.

To make it extra special, the 1st COSCOM's Food Service Officer, Sgt. Maj. Gary Belush encouraged the Coalition Forces Land Component Command's food service officer to challenge each dinning facility in the region to compete with each other with the winner given the honor of having the best DFAC for Operation Iraqi Freedom III-Kuwait, said Blair.

The dining hall, which can feed hundreds of service members in one sitting, was decked out in fall foliage and Thanksgiving decorations. Ice sculptures and hanging tassels were added to complement the décor.

"For many of our Soldiers, this is the first time they are spending time away from home during the holidays. We want to ensure that each Soldier had a Thanksgiving dinner with traditional dishes served to them by their leaders whether they were back at Fort Bragg or here in Kuwait," said Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine, commander, 1st COSCOM.

In keeping with long-standing Army tradition of senior leaders serving junior Soldiers during the Thanksgiving meal, Fontaine, Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, Command Sgt. Maj. of 1st COSCOM and other senior members of the 1st COSCOM removed their desert camouflage uniform hats and replaced them with chefs' hats.

"Our leadership, to include the camp's leadership, took the initiative and carefully planned for this meal. Integral to the success of this traditional dinner was the employment of members of the 1st COSCOM's award winning culinary team. The result was an authentic traditional dinner for all service members here with a festive atmosphere," said Fontaine.

Approximately 15 of these 1st COSCOM Soldier teamed up with Reserve, National Guard and



Photo by Spc. Zhi Wong

Command team Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine, 1st COSCOM commander and Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, follow military tradition by serving Soldiers an assortment of Thanksgiving dishes in the dining facility Nov. 25.

Tammimi Global contractors to successfully feed the residents of Camp Virginia.

The holiday meal consisted of 1,700 pounds of turkey, 1,200 pounds of ham, 1,400 pounds of prime rib, 1,500 pounds of shrimp, 1,200 pounds of stuffing, 5,000 servings of pie, sweet potatoes, mash potatoes corn on the cob and cookies. To complete the meal, a number of large cakes full of whipped cream frosting were served.

Additional treats such as non-alcohol eggnog, assorted nuts and ice cream with a "make your own sundae" option were also served.

Soldiers within the 1st COSCOM also had the opportunity to see and talk to family members.

"I was able to sleep in late, and then went to lunch. The best thing about today was going to see and talk to my family with video teleconferencing," said Cpl. Brent Steel, operation admin sergeant, Headquarters and

See THANKS, next page

Chaplain's Corner

Another Year Gone!



**CH (Lt. Col.) Edward Ahl
Deputy Chaplain, 1st COSCOM**

As I stand on the threshold of another year, I wonder about the strength of my commitment to the faith to which I so vocally pledge my allegiance. Am I guilty of more lip service than heart service? Maybe you sometimes share the same feeling, especially when falling short of God's high calling. I don't know about you, but I miss the mark every day, often by a mile. The only thing that keeps me from giving up, is His promise to always forgive me and love me even when I foul up egregiously. Now that's grace.

I am not so sure I completely understand grace. I know it is an unmerited gift from God, but I believe it requires a childlike faith to grasp its scope, its full dimension, its measureless majesty, a faith like that of a 5-year old girl named Sarah whom I recently heard about. Her brother had developed a rare blood disease and

needed a blood transfusion to stay alive. Only Sarah's blood was a match.

When asked if she would give her blood to save her brother, Sarah at first looked puzzled. Her parents patiently explained the procedure and the importance of her gift. Finally, Sarah seemed to understand and agreed to the transfusion. The next day at the hospital, Sarah lay down on a cot and watched intently as a nurse placed a needle into her arm and turned on the blood-extracting pump. Sarah's mother sat at her side holding her hand reassuringly. After a few minutes, Sarah motioned to her mother to come closer. She had a question: "When," Sarah whispered into her mother's ear, "am I going to die?" Obviously she had misunderstood the nature of the procedure, but her commitment to her brother was total. She was ready to give him anything he needed, including her life. In the year ahead, we need to remember that that is exactly what Christ did for you and me, and we need to act accordingly.

"Remind us God, when we forget: Love so amazing, so divine, so deep, so wide, so tall, demands from each of us our life, our soul, our all." God Bless Your Pea Pickin' Hearts!! Amen.

THANKS, previous page

Headquarters Company, 1st COSCOM.

"I miss my wife and three kids, but I am now here with the unit; a bound between fellow Soldiers," said Spc. Hector Lopez Jr., intelligence administrator, HHC, 1st COSCOM.

The hours for the lunchtime meal was extended an additional two hours in order

to give every service member the opportunity to enjoys a Thanksgiving meal and use VTC to talk to their families.

"No one should feel lonely because we are all away from home and are bound together more; and we can go through this [deployment] together as a team," said Lopez

The Camp Virginia dinning facility earned tops honors for the best dinning facility in Kuwait for 2004.

From the Mule's Mouth

What will your New Years resolution be for 2005?



"To spend as much money as I can, in a year at the government's expense."

-Sgt. 1st Class Kevin R. Ryan
Deputy Comptroller
HHC, 1st Corps Support Command



"To get into better shape and to be debt free."

-Sgt. Keith Franklin
Motor Transport Operator
HHC, Corps Distribution Command



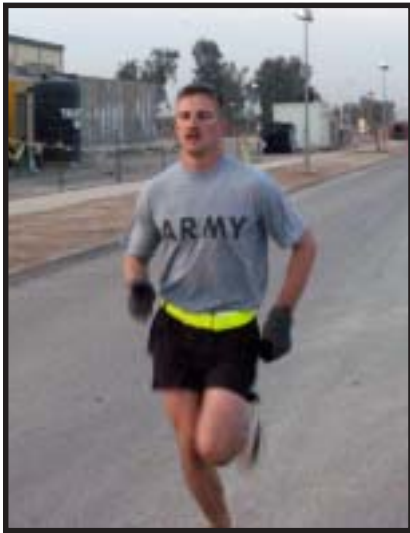
"To get home safely to see my kids."

-Pfc. Gregory Dow
Welder
264th Corps Support Battalion

1st Annual Jingle Bell Jog kicks off

Story and photos by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO

While being deployed to another country, away from loved ones during the holidays can lower Soldiers' spirits, this was not the case for some stationed here. More than 220 runners braved the cold weather to participate in the LSA Anaconda's First Annual Jingle Bell Fun Run here Dec. 24 at 7 a.m.



First place male runner 1st Lt. Jesse Blanton finished the race in 18 minutes and 15 seconds at the fun run Dec. 24.

The run took place around a five-kilometer radius of the post, with the start line beginning and ending across from Holt Stadium.

"We planned this run for the morale of the troops to temporarily keep their minds occupied on something else," said Malcolm Barte, gym technician and run coordinator for Morale Welfare and Recreation.

"The troops keep their minds occupied on stressful things as it is and hopefully these events will lighten the load," Barte said.

The participants were represented by a multitude of runners.

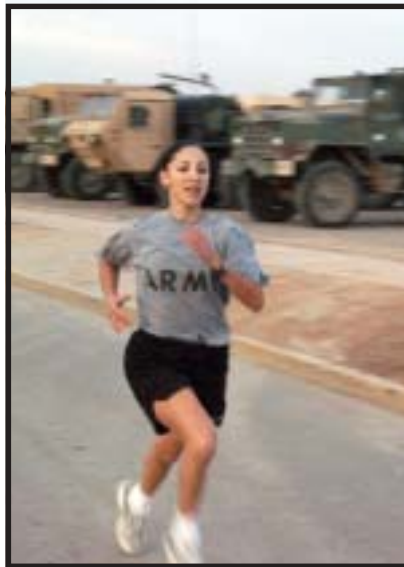
"About 70 percent of the runners are military, 20 percent civilian and 10

percent local nationals," said Barte.

The first place male runner was 1st Lt. Jesse Blanton, pilot and medical evacuation team leader, 82nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance), from Fort Riley, Kan. He crossed the finish line in 18 minutes and 15 seconds.

"I am glad they had the run. It's a good way to spend Christmas with other Soldiers who are in the Christmas spirit since we can't be with our families," Blanton said.

The first place female runner was Staff Sgt. Emma Williams, squad leader, 50th Signal Battalion, 35th Signal Brigade from Fort Bragg, N.C. Her run time was 20 minutes and 25 seconds.



Staff Sgt. Emma Williams dashes across the finish line as the first female runner to cross the finish line during the fun run Dec. 24.

"I didn't think I would come in first because it's cold and I just got here. This is my first ever race to run," said Williams.

The runners weren't the only ones to brave the 40-degree weather. Volunteers from all over the installation

participated by passing out water and energy drinks and cheering for the runners as they ran by.

"We have Soldiers, foreign and local contractors who wanted to be here to join us," said Barte.

As the runners ran by during their first loop, the volunteers cheered them on. Applause and cheers for the runners grew louder as they crossed the finish line.

"I volunteered because I want to be here because members of my unit are running and we wanted to support," said Sgt. Manuel Alfaro, maintenance technician, 961st Quartermaster Company, 507th Corps Support Group.

"There is a bunch of us here from my unit volunteering," said Sgt. 1st Class Ruben Rocha, sergeant of the guard, 961st QM Co., 507th CSG. "When they are willing to run in (cold) weather like this, we have to support," Rocha said.

Besides the run, MWR had other sporting events planned for the Holiday weekend to include a 40 and 100-yard dash, a one-mile speed walk race, dodge ball, volleyball and a basketball game.

"The weekend was planned for a lot of fun to raise the spirit of the Soldiers during the holidays," Barte said.



Soldiers from various units demonstrate the spirit of Christmas by wearing Santa Clause and elf costumes during the fun run Dec. 24.

USO ‘Handshake Tour’ in Iraq boosts Soldiers’ morale

Photo and story by Pfc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM Public Affairs

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—A handful of celebrities joined the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff onstage at LSA Anaconda’s stadium Tuesday to thank the men and women for their sacrifices here in Iraq.

Actor-comedians Robin Williams and Blake Clark, football legend John Elway, model-sportscaster Leeann Tweeden and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers entertained thousands of troops as part of a world-class United Services Organizations tour.

Myers began the show by thanking the men and women of LSA Anaconda for everything they have done in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. During the motivating speech, Myers thanked service members for all the sacrifices they have made to make OIF the success that it is.

After Myers gave his thanks, he then introduced Tweeden, whom offered her gratitude for everything the roaring audience has done.

Clark, known for his role as Harry the Hardware Guy on “Home Improvement,” entertained troops with stories of his experiences as a platoon leader during the Vietnam War, life growing up in Georgia and his gratitude for everything service members in the audience had done.

Tweeden was next on stage to introduce former Denver Broncos quarterback John Elway. The words of a sports icon can reach deep into the hearts of service members who try their best to keep up with the games back home, and although Elway wasn’t

able to give them the game, he certainly brought joy to troops with a few sacks of footballs he threw to them whether they were 15 feet or 150 feet from the stage.

Following Elway, Williams took the stage.

Williams brought laughter to the troops as far away as the Soldiers playing basketball in a distant court with improvisational comedy about armored humvees, the C-130 ride to



Two time Super Bowl champion quarterback John Elway signs a football after the show. Following the USO show Soldiers had the opportunity to be photographed with the celebrities and receive signed autographs.

LSA Anaconda, Saddam Hussein and even the Military Police dog who watched from in front of the stage.

Upon completion of Williams’ act, the celebrities of the 2004 Holiday Handshake Tour spoke with troops, signed autographs, and posed for pictures.

“People back home appreciate what [the troops] do,” said Myers.

“We’re just here to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, happy Chanukah, happy Kwanza, and Chinese New year,” said Williams, “although I think we missed that.”

FAMILY, continued from page 16

deployment while temporarily stationed in Kuwait. They spent Thanksgiving together.

The brothers also have a cousin simultaneously deployed with them to Iraq.

"I would like to start a family tradition of the military with us," said Spc. Steve Reyes, administrative clerk, CDC, 1st COSCOM. His wife is Sgt. Marjorie Reyes, automated logistical supply specialist, CDC, 1st COSCOM.

They met each other while stationed in Germany and have been married for three years. Both are currently deployed to the same location in Iraq in support of OIF.

Marjorie has an uncle in the Army Reserves. Steve is the first

"I think that it is good we are here together. Also, as a spouse, when you both are in [the military], you understand when your spouse has to work late and so you aren't upset," said Steve.

"My husband and I aren't too excited about [our children] joining [the Army] because like most parents, we want to ensure that our children are always safe," said Maj. Maria R. Miller, operations officer, CDC, 1st COSCOM.

Miller, who is currently deployed to Iraq, is married to a Special Forces team sergeant currently deployed to Afghanistan. Her father was an administrative specialist and served in World War II. Miller also has a cousin who served in the Army Reserves in a transportation unit in Maryland.

With her father who began their family tradition, she and her husband have continued on with the tradition that she is hesitant about having passing on to her children.

Miller elaborated by citing the infamous saying, 'I fight in today's army so that my

children don't have to tomorrow.'

However, like all understanding parents, she admits that she and her husband will support the endeavors of their children.

Like the other couples, Miller agreed with the advantages of having another member of the family a part of the military.

The good thing about a family of military members is that there is an



Photo by unknown

Staff Sgt. Nathan Mckeldin (left) with brother, Pfc. Jerome Bishop. Both Brothers currently deployed to different parts of Iraq in support of OIF.

understanding about the work schedules and long work hours, said Miller.

"He helps me out with a lot of issues, and I help him because we both have different points of view from the officer and enlisted perspective," Miller said.

However, Miller also cited that there is a downside when it comes to deployments. Separation and ensuring that personal effects are in order, to include making sure that children are well taken care of, can cause some stress.

This is Miller's second deployment within two years. Prior to that, she and her husband were sent to separate assignments to different installations, Miller said.

Both Millers are careerist, with Miller's husband having the opportunity to retire within a couple of years if he decides.

There are numerous family members within the 1st COSCOM that all share a tradition that adds family and military together equating to a legacy of prestige.

Like the Akin legacy, which goes beyond the Spanish American War, these are only a fragment of the families that exist in today Army, hoping to create and carrying on their own legacy.

"The military family defines the true essence of selfless service," Andre said.



Spc. Steve Reyes with wife, Sgt. Marjorie Reyes. Both Reyes are currently deployed together in support of OIF.

generation in his family to join the military, and like his wife, intends on being an Army careerist.

"I will encourage my son to join the military to see if he liked it. The military has so much to offer. It will give him independence the way [the Army] gave it to me," Marjorie said.

Neither Soldier found a downside to being deployed jointly.

Message to my Soldier

Sgt. 1st Class Herschel Gillins
264th Logisitc Task Force
To a wonderful husband and
father we love and miss you
very much. Hurry home.
Just remember when you get
down "cute and fuzzy bunnies".
Love Sharon & Megan

• • • • •

Sgt. Luis F. Rodriguez
HHD 264 CSB, 46th CSG
It was great having you home
for R&R and just cant wait to
have you home again. Love you
and miss you very much!!
Christie and Alex Miss you
Papi!!

• • • • •

Capt. Christopher W. Degn
264, HHD Company (46th CSG)
Dear Chris, We are so proud of
you and support you 110% in
what you are doing. Our
thoughts and prayers are with
you always! We love you!
Kristi & Victor

• • • • •

Col. Floyd Hudson
507th CSG
Hi Floyd, Happy New Year! The
boys and I miss you and trust
that all are well. Both of our
families send greetings and
their love. Take care. Much
love, Robin

• • • • •

Sgt. Sarah Lapine
364 Supply Company, LTF 264
To our Niece, Sarah: We love
and miss you...come home safe
and soon.
Uncle George and Aunt Roberta

I hope and pray for a safer New
Year and return home soon. I
am very proud of you and all
the soldiers. Love to you. Mom

1st. Lt. George Franklin
259 Field Service Company
George, we are proud of your
accomplishments and we
patiently await your return. I
love you and our love is forever,
love, Laura Marie.

• • • • •

Brian Savage
264 Logistic Task Force
To my soldier, My everything,
With every day such light you
bring, Our hearts are with you,
In all you do, With love and
compassion, The whole deploy-
ment through.
Love Wifey

• • • • •

Spc. Brian K. Manley
364 Supply Company, LTF 264
The kids & I just want you to
know that we love you and we
are SO proud of you! Chin up
& we will see you soon! Forever,
Wifey

• • • • •

Spc. Frank Moore
364 supply, LTF 264, 46 Co.
We want to wish you a Happy
New Year and a quick return
home. We love and miss you.
You are always in our prayers.
Love, Lorrie, Ashton, and
Tabitha

• • • • •

Maj. Joe Dixon
HHD, 264th LTF, 1st COSCOM
Joey-I want you to know that I
am very proud of you. I love
you more than anything. We
are almost there. Stay focused.
Be safe. XOXO Amy

SFC Lester Ruiz
264th CSB HHD Co.
My Loving Husband, There are
no measurable words to
describe the loneliness felt in
our home without your
presence. Our love for you is
deep and everlasting. Always,
Gwen

• • • • •

PFC Scott R. Cyre
364 Supply Company, LTF 264
Happy New Year, Scott! God's
brought us past the halfway
mark. Now it's downhill till you
come home. We are proud of
you and love you! Brigita,
Sean, Cole, Jared

• • • • •

Spc. Ian Nuckols
364 Supply Company, LTF 264
Just a note from all of us. We
Love You! And just wanted you
to know how proud we are.
Thank all of you for your sacri-
fices. Love, MOM

• • • • •

Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Thomas
Unit not submitted
Thanks for all you are doing.
We love you very much. See
you when you get home! Love,
Sherry, Brandon Jr. and Josh

• • • • •

SUBMISSIONS: If you have a deployed
1st COSCOM Soldier and would like to
submit a message, email their rank, full
name and unit with no more than a 30
word message to
sonise.lumbaca@us.army.mil. Mes-
sages more than 30 words will be cut
off at the 30 word mark or last sentence
previous to it in order to allow everyone
the opportunity to submit. Please en-
sure that message do not contain infor-
mation too personal in nature or inap-
propriate content.

